WAMH / WAMF Records

Staff - Position descriptions

1988 BOX NO. 2 FOLDER NO. 60

WAMH STEREO FM
AMHERST COLLEGE AMHERST, MASS. 01002 413·542·2224

Music Director

Definition

The Music Directors at WAMH play several roles. Besides being the custodians for the records shelved in MCR (both "old" and "new"), the MDs are responsible for reviewing all incoming albums, buying replacement records, determining station policy in the Music Department and maintaining positive relationships with record representatives in the music industry. The MDs must do everything in their power to promote WAMH in the eyes of record reps and management companies in an effort to maximize service, etc. Record companies should feel eternally indebted to WAMH for the service **we** provide to **them.** As of October, 1988, WAMH is a heavy-weight in the CMJ college radio pool because of efforts made in the Music Department, and we want to keep it that way.

Responsibilities

Daily:
- Office Hours (Generally 4 to 5 p.m., Although Flexible)
- Bring Outgoing Mail to the Post Office
- Get Station Mail from Campus Post Office (Box 1815) and Place in Appropriate E-Board Member's Box
- Return Messages Received on the Answering Machine
- Process DJs' Playlists in the "MD Book"

Sunday:
- Compile Top 20 (Top 60 if it's a CMJ Reporting Date)
- "New Music Review" Show (9 to 10 p.m.)

Monday:
- Report to Appropriate Trade
  - Call CMJ at (516) 248-9111 with Top 60 Groups, Top 10 Adds, 3 Adventure Picks, Top 10 Cuts, and Top 10 Audience Response (1/2, 1/16, 2/13, 2/27, 3/13, 3/27, etc.)
  - Call WARD at (415) 668-0900 with Top 20 Groups, and Top 5 Adds (1/9, 1/23, 2/6, 2/20, 3/6, 3/20, etc.)
- E-Board Meeting (6:45 p.m.)
- (Also, if it's a CMJ Reporting Date, Print Up Labels for the Record Companies, Print Up the Playlist, and Take Both Over to the Mailing Center in the Basement of College Hall Before 4:30 p.m.)

Tuesday (after CMJ Reporting Dates): Pick Up the Playlists at the Mailing Center, Pay With a Check (from the illustrious Business Manager), Bring the Bulk Mailing to the Amherst Town Post Office (Before 3 p.m.)

Monthly: Remove the "Old" Records (i.e., the records that are overplayed, stupid or more than three months old) from the "New" Shelves, Enter Them into the Computer, Print Up Labels, Place Labels on Albums, Reshelve Albums in MCR

Monthly/Semi-Monthly: Print Up a New Catalog as Needed
Sell 12-inches that Aren't Remixed & Have No Unreleased B-Sides and LPs that Are Triples
Check that the Records in MCR Are in Proper Order

Music Policy

This is in a constant state of flux, depending upon the music available at a given time and upon the current Program Director's and MDs' understandings of and philosophies regarding alternative programming. Eighty to eighty-five per cent of the broadcast week is currently devoted to progressive rock.

Station Stuff the MD Might Be Asked About

Our call letters are W-A-M-H.
Our frequency is 89.3 FM.
Our wattage is 150 watts, broadcasting from a transmitter "high atop" Mt. Lincoln.
Our broadcast radius varies between 35 and 40 miles, covering Northampton, Springfield and parts of Worcester.
Our potential audience is... oh, let's say around 50000, which means that at any given time maybe 500 people are listening.
Our business line is (413) 542-2224.
Our current motto is "WAMH, The Best Progressive Music in the Pioneer Valley"... Unless we ever think of something better.

PROMOTIONS/PUBLICITY DIRECTOR, WAMH 89.3FM
Caroline Oestermeyer
1988

The most important job I felt needed to be done as Publicity/ Promotions Director was to print and distribute program guides that included show names and descriptions. Two semesters before I took the position there had been a program (DJ names only, no descriptions) printed in The Student. The following semester this was not even done. In the last year, I also did record and concert ticket giveaways and kept a concert/ upcoming event calendar. Other activities were to hang WAMH signs around the valley and to publicize WAMH events (new DJ meetings, general staff meetings, etc.)

Program Guide: A sheet about cost, the computer program, paper, etc. is in the manilla folder with the program guide drafts and final copies. The first time we did the program guide we had DJ's during their first show fill out an index card with their name, show time, show name, and brief show description. This worked fairly well. The second time we did the guide we had the DJ's fill out the same information on the sheet with which they signed up for a slot. This was great because we definitely got a slip from everyone, but some people like to name their shows based on their time slot which is a problem with this system. I would suggest the latter method of getting the information and then give DJ's a chance to give you any changes. The easiest way to get changes is to print a draft of the guide with what you get on the sheets and then post it in the foyer of the station (good way to catch typos too). Once the guides were printed by OAS (Edna was an especial help) we put them in all the students boxes and sent them to the faculty, staff, and administration. The Public Affairs provides mailing labels for the faculty, staff, administration (get them in department order, NOT alphabetical). We took the extra guides and distributed them between Hampshire College, Main Street Records, For the Record, Yesterday and Today Records, and Al Bum's. We were lucky this last semester because we ended up with a lot of extra copies, because OAS accidently printed some on white paper instead of the paper we had special ordered.

Calendar: I put shows I was aware of on the calendar (from the Advocate, etc.) and then encourage DJ's to put things they know about on it.

Giveaways: I typed notes to DJ's notes about what they were to give away. The note also said the winner they could pick up their prize at the station between 4-5pm weekdays from an E-Board member. I left the albums in the MDs' office with a post-it note with the winner's name on it, so it would be easy for them to get it and not cause the MDs trouble. A surprising number of people did not pick up their albums... DJs are psyched to do giveaways. I chose the DJ by music type (i.e. an album or group I thought

they probably played on their show). It would be good to do more promo for these giveaways. The MDs tell you when they get albums to be given away. Concert promoters call about ticket giveaways. Bill from LIVE Productions called me about tickets on several shows and would like to continue working with WAMH.

Other publicity: We hung WAMH signs around the valley (Northampton including Smith, Hampshire, the town of Amherst, etc.)

Suggestions: Now that the program guide is relatively routine more publicity projects can be undertaken. T-shirts need to be done. Initial funding has to be found. Most anything that will get WAMH's name spread around (in positive terms) is a good project.

PUBLIC SERVICE DIRECTOR (PSA CZAR)

The PSA Czar, usually considered a primarily paper-pushing position, is actually quite powerful in determining how WAMH is represented to the community at large. The Czar (or Czarina) decides what specific causes and events are worth publicizing by our station. This means that one's political views will almost necessarily come into play--therefore, the nature of the position requires it to be filled by someone with a strong commitment to national, state, and community social and political causes.

That is not to say that the PSA Czar doesn't push a lot of paper--he/she generally gets more mail than anyone else at WAMH (yeah!), but going through it all is very time-consuming. The PSA Czar receives notices from all kinds of organizations, e.g. the US Government, the American Cancer Society, Marlboro College, Amherst Unitarian Church, etc. The Czar must sort through these and find the information that he/she believes is most pertinent to the listening audience. There are many organizations who will try to pass off comercial endorsements as Public Service announcements. It is important to make sure that WAMH only publicizes not-for-profit agencies. Finding out this information can often take time, since organizations will be loathe to say anything that may prevent their announcement from being aired.

Some organizations will send pre-written PSAs, while others will just send newsletters out of which the Czar must create his own. There is a PSA program in the station computer that allows the Czar to input the text of each PSA as well as information about the sponsor which can be recalled if necessary. The written PSAs can then be printed out onto index cards and placed in MCR for djs to read. The Czar must also periodically check the PSA box and remove any out-of-date PSAs, and check the logs to see which ones the djs are playing--information sought after by most of the major ad distributors.

In addition, the Czar can make PSAs on CARTs. This allows for diversity and creativity in the twice-hourly airing of the announcements. The Czar should be able to use the equipment in C-studio effectively--he will receive pre-recorded messages on cassette and reel-to-reel which he must transfer to CART, as well as using the machines to create ones of his own. He must be careful not to trivialize that which he is publicizing by "making fun" of the PSA. This is especially important when djs read the PSAs. Some of the PSAs at WAMH are somewhat tongue in cheek, but the majority of them aired should be serious.

The PSA Czar has the final say on that which WAMH boradcasts to fulfill its legal obligation to the community. Therefore, he has the right to pull any announcement that he deems unfit.

In addition, the czar should work to further fuse the station with the communtiy by helping to develop programs---these can range from sponsoring a dance with proceeds going to the soup kitchen, to airing differing views on community issues. This aspect of the job is very open, and so a person with motivation and originality would serve the position best.

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Staff Representative

Representing a group as diverse as the 180+ DJ's at W-AMH is an interesting concept. David Lapides has christened them the Amorphous Blob, and they answer to that name most of the time. But frankly, we don't hear from them all that much. If you like to get alot of mail you might be happier being the PSA Czar. The Suggestion Box isn't exactly overflowing, and the response rate to a survey done by the staff reps last spring was pathetic (even lower than the number of people who bother to vote for staff reps.) I realize that to most of the DJ's I am just a voice on the phone nagging them about vaccuuming, and it's too bad. I think you just have to try to meet and talk to as many individual DJ's as you can - drop by or call up during their shows - and try to get some feed-back then. Of course most of them know at least one member of the E-Board anyway so they take their questions and problems directly to them. In the end you can trust them to come to you or another E-Board member if they have any complaints.

Of course the real challenge and thrill of the job is keeping the station clean. (Before this semester I never dreamed I could get so excited about lint-free rugs and empty garbage cans.) There are enough shows that it is possible to get through an entire semester with each group only having to clean one room once or twice. Dave and I decided to pick a different block of shows each week - say noon to 8 - hoping that people would be inspired by seeing the people before them cleaning. At first we thought we could just call each DJ whose turn it was to clean up

- but it's impractical since the slots are only two hours long. And then there are always the graveyard shifts. So we put up a clean-up schedule behind the door, and people are supposed to initial it when they do their assigned room. Everybody should know where the schedule is by now, but it is still a good idea to call and remind people to check it. We gave everyone who forgot the first time a second chance, and only one person didn't use it. I would suggest putting up a weekly schedule next semester, to make things simpler and more efficient.

The best part about being a W-AMH staff rep is that, as a member of the E-Board, you become familiar with how the station is run. If you'd like to get more involved in the station but you're not prepared to run for General Manager quite yet, a Staff Representative is a good thing to be. (But it also helps to have a passion for clean carpets.)

The Staff Reps are primarily the liasions between the E-Board and the WAMH DJ's. Each Staff Rep should be prepared to consider everything discussed in E-Board meetings from the viewpoint of the staff members. This may mean, at times, being the devil's advocate for the E-Board, pointing out what unnecessary or merely unpopular burdens may be levied upon the DJ's as a result of their executive decisions.

The most menial duty of the Staff Reps is to construct and implement a clean-up schedule for the station. An efficient and simple schedule will keep the station clean and only mildly burden the DJ's, who are all responsible for helping out.

Listening to problems, complaints or comments the DJ's might have about the station is important also. Explaining certain E-Board decisions satisfactorily keeps everyone happy, and passing on DJ feedback makes WAMH better for all of us.